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VOICES IN THE FOG

By Junius B. Wood

As in a fog settling over a highway, Governments today move in a haze of unknown voices and shadowy byways. The old-time official who stood in the open to receive his bouquets or brickbats is disappearing.

The new-style official, without a mask or falseface, just as effectively conceals himself from the public and absolves himself of all responsibility for what he causes it to hear or believe. He tells a story to a chosen few and they spread it. But, it can be officially confirmed, denied or forgotten, whichever is convenient. The trick of thus regimenting public information or thought is what is known as the "background only" talk.

The secret of a "background only" talk is to keep the public from finding out who has talked. A modern Delphic Oracle, like an unseen pagan God, sends up smoke spirals from the earth's innards and favored spectators read meanings into them. Each spectator has his own version. Instead of a responsible statement of government policy, the public gets an assortment of echoes, surmises and opinions.

Few Americans outside of Washington realize how much of what they accept as information about their own government is based on such "background only" talks. The new phrase is more mellifluous and more ambiguous than the hackneyed "off the record" for such deceptions. When an audience is collected from the hinterland, more expensive and more elaborate than rallying the local elite, it becomes an "indoctrination course". Also, still using Washington patois, it is a "seminar", suggestive of grace and culture, especially when the visitors at government expense are women.

Whatever the name, the routine and results are the same. A speaker is introduced: "Mr. Jinglebells will address you on a subject on which he is an authority. What he tells you is for background only. You may repeat what he says but his name is not to be used nor may his remarks be even vaguely credited to a 'high government source'. Say, 'it is learned', or still better, 'informed circles know'. Merely being here today puts you in the know, makes you one of an important informed circle."

If the listeners are sufficiently gullible, and most of them are, they swell with imagined importance. They are close to the throne. They do not realize that they are being

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used merely to publicize something which an official or a politician wants the public to hear, something for which he will not assume personal or official responsibility.

Thus are the "background only" foundlings born. A government official reports information which citizens in a Democracy should have. Instead of backing it up with his name, he drops the waif on a doorstep and ducks for cover. The slight to public morale, the affront to Democracy, is more tragic than the disowning of a newborn babe by its mother. Information reaches the public as gossip or opinion instead of a responsible government's report to its own people. In twenty-four hours, the versions are as visible and varied as the neon signs in a shopping center.

THE "BACKGROUND ONLY" talk is so effective that it has gone on a mass production basis. Producers no longer whisper into a single pair of ears. They call meetings and talk into microphones. The audience may be newspaper correspondents, radio broadcasters, businessmen and women or a mixture of all. The assembly line also is mobile. It may roll into a cabinet officer's sanctum, into a hotel or club or even into an auditorium.

The State Department, most prolific in this respect, reports that it staged 1,500 "background only" sessions in the past eighteen months, grinding them out at the rate of twenty a week. Other Cabinet departments, visiting foreign dignitaries and private businesses also indulge. Playing the "man in a mask" role is popular and easy.

Winston Churchill, British Prime Minister, spoke to half a dozen private organizations when visiting this country. These were in addition to private conferences with President Truman and other officials. In the quasi-public sessions, he discussed high policy and answered questions in his usual direct style.

More than 500 men and women from separate organizations were at one noonday luncheon. Guests were not selected for their ability or past performance in keeping secrets. Quite the contrary — they were selected to give the widest possible publicity to his ideas. They were warned not to disclose that these were the authoritative or the proposed policies of the present head of the British government. Naturally, it worked.

Within a few hours, the millions in newspaper and radio audiences were receiving weighty explanations of British statecraft, past, present and future. The explanations paraphrased or amplified what Churchill had said. But for all the public knew, they were the opinions of a writer, broadcaster or mere spectator, not the authoritative statements of the British Prime Minister.

Other "background only" speakers have had larger but not as carefully screened audiences. One with so many top level publicity professionals (as Churchill had) is

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rare. General George C. Marshall probably holds the record with a "background only" speech to several thousand men, women and children; it was open to all comers.

A few weeks ago, a fairly large meeting was called to hear one of these "background only" talks. The speaker was identified as the mysterious diplomatic strategist of the State Department. Making it more farcical, he had given an interview to newspapers several hours earlier, though this was not known to the audience being pledged to secrecy. His astute deductions were on the streets for all to read before those at the closed-door session even heard them.

President Truman had sent a note to the Soviet Government through diplomatic channels. Moscow replied similarly, but it had also given the reply to newspapers and radio before the President received it. From this breach, not only in diplomatic procedure, but also in ordinary courtesy, the State Department strategist reached the strange conclusion that Moscow is becoming less belligerant. "Tell this conclusion to the world but don't say that the State Department says so", was the purpose of the secret talk.

Whether the conclusion was logical was immaterial. The disclosure of the State Department attitude made the talk significant. What was not said was more important than what was said. No disclosure or even hint was given of our own Government's policy. The speaker was the Department's boasted strategist and should know — if the Government has a policy.

CONDITIONS in the troubled Orient are the popular "background only" talks at present. Even top rank Ambassadors are making them. The talkers' strategy to stop the Communist tide in that part of the world does not vary. What they propose sounds practical and is designed to win popular approval. It pleases the public but they or the Government do not openly take responsibility for it.

Nor does the Government indicate any intention of following it. That is another deception of the "background only "technique. The people get one impression of the conduct of public affairs and the Government either does nothing or does the opposite. Foreign governments are expected to heed the advice of an American Ambassador. Yet, our State Department does not give the same weight to the opinions of its own Ambassadors. Only voices which the public cannot identify come from the fog.

"U. S. to Restrict Russian Travel" is the headline over a newspaper article. Foreign diplomats in Moscow are not permitted to drive their own cars, to travel more than 21 miles from the Red Capital without a permit or to visit some forty other cities. The newspaper article says the same restrictions will be imposed on Red diplomats in the United States. The information comes from "diplomatic sources", as anonymous as a

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"background only" talker. The public gets the impression that stern action is certain but no responsible official has said so.

Formosa and Korea are the most critical areas in American foreign affairs. Formosa outdates Korea among unsolved problems. The American people are assured through the guided but deceptive publicity of "background only" talks that the Chinese Nationalist troops on Formosa should be permitted to return to the Chinese mainland and fight the Communists.

At the same time, the public knows — thanks more to freedom of the press than to official mention of the fact — that our Navy, under State Department orders, keeps Formosa in "protective custody". The Formosa troops, prisoners in an island concentration camp, can't fight anybody. Even their planes and navy are prevented from attacking Communist shipping. Official action is the exact opposite to what the American public is told by officially sponsored "background only" talks.

The political and military actualities are clear to even an armchair strategist. Our Army is fighting Chinese Communists at a staggering cost in American lives and property and our Navy prevents Chinese from returning to their own country to fight the same Communists. Our Armed Forces are unified in Pentagon offices but not on the field of operations. Our State Department sticks stubbornly to a stalemated plan of operations while assuring the public through "background only" talks that another plan might bring victory.

Chinese Communist armies are fighting in Korea outside their eastern frontier and massing on their far western frontier to invade Indo-China. Our Navy bars other Chinese, who want to fight for us if not with us, from making a diversion to split this Communist military machine in the center. Meanwhile, the wholesale extermination of Chinese and outrages against foreigners inside China continue under American protection from invasion.

Nor are the treaty talks in Korea new in Communist tactics. Marx wrote that the march of world Communism must be a succession of advances and retreats. Lenin, Stalin and others have said the same. When the going gets tough, stop and talk of peace, and use the breathing spell to marshall the Communist forces for another advance. These were the tactics successfully employed in China and are now being employed in Korea.

And the American public is fed echoes of "background only" talks — the modernized opiate for the people. The talks create an impression that our government has a policy based on realities, on something more than futile surmises of what Moscow may do. The public hears daily of more American casualties, more planes shot down, more property destroyed and more billions needed from the taxpayers. Our generals fight an enemy and at the same time palaver with the same enemy. While the young men die, the public at home is lulled with "background only" talks.

Junius B. Wood, free lance writer and contributor to *Nation's Business,* was for many years a foreign correspondent for various newspapers and services.

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HUMAN EVENTS

FRANK C. HANIGHEN, *Editor* — FRANK CHODOROV, *Associate Editor*

Volume IX, No. 9 — Wednesday, February 27, 1952 — Washington, D. C.

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As Others See Us: The Pentagon — these past few days — is anxiously contemplating a fact which is fast becoming more than an interesting fact, indeed is evolving rapidly into what is called a "situation". It is verily a situation of terrifying implications to the United States.

The fact — known to few outside the State and Defense Departments — is that the governments of no less than nine foreign nations (supposedly of impeccable anti-Communist nature) have flatly turned down offers of the U.S. arms aid.

We regret that we have been unable so far to extract from our Pentagon sources the names of seven of these nine nations. All we know is that there are nine. But two are known to the public — or would be if the news stories concerning them were not relegated to back pages or otherwise muffed. These two are:

(1) Indonesia. The fall (last week) of the cabinet of the Government of Indonesia (formerly Dutch East Indies) was caused by a treaty with the U.S. which the country's foreign minister imprudently signed. The treaty prescribed U.S. arms for Indonesia. The *New York Times* says the Indonesian politicos did not like it because they thought it would "mean the binding of Indonesia firmly to American foreign policy".

(2) Mexico. Near home, Mexico last Friday celebrated George Washington's birthday by turning down a U.S. offer of military aid. "Observers", says the A.P. dispatch of February 22, "blamed Communist pressure for the Mexican action. This is the first refusal of American arms from any Latin American country."

Now this situation, while not discussed in our press, has set the foreign diplomatic crowd in Washington agog.

What all this comes to, as foreign diplomats point out, is that various small nations are beginning to regard U.S. aid as a danger to their own existence. Taking U.S. arms may bring down on them the hostility of the Soviet Union, in one way or another. The spectacle of our weak policy in China and Korea does not encourage smaller nations to throw in their lot with our foreign adventures. The U.S. does not really back up its friends by firm action — that is the basic cause. Foreign diplomats here remark that such a situation is disturbing enough in Asia, or in Europe, but it is downright alarming when it develops right on our own border, in Mexico.

As we go to press, we note a *Chicago Tribune* dispatch from its correspondent in Ottawa, Canada, reporting that the Soviet diplomatic mission there has launched a propaganda campaign. Soviet diplomats in the capital of our northern neighbor are promising Canada peace, friendship, trade and "independence from the U.S." *Verb. sap.*

Lisbon Ballyhoo: Rarely in recent history have official wind machines revolved at such a high rate of r.p.m. as they have in the past few days, at the Lisbon conference. The average thinking American, recalling the similar noisy blitzes of Yalta, Tehran and Potsdam, is asking: "What are they trying to sell me now?"

What the stately periods of our own Red Dean are designed to put over is a picture of (1) Western European security by an army of 50 divisions (against 200 Russian divisions); (2) Germany and

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France after a thousand years of mutual hostility clasped finally in affectionate embrace; and (3) an aggregation of bankrupt exchequers underwriting a $300 billion program.

The true picture, of course, is nothing of the sort. The leaders at Lisbon staged their show simply to impress Congressional committees which will very soon examine the Truman Administration's request for $10 billion aid.

Various signs and portents noted in this Capital strongly support this view:

(1) The knowledge, now just leaking out, that General Gruenther (Ike's deputy) and General Norstad (Air Chief for Ike) are coming home to testify on the Hill and make speeches (on some of which, we learn, State Department litterateurs are already at work). Neither Gruenther nor Norstad have been known to err in putting the truth before their careers which, they must realize, depend on the favor of the White House.

(2) The "mystifying" silence of Eisenhower who stayed away from Lisbon (more concerning this below).

(3) Signs of real revolt in Congress which might well curtail appropriations. Many of the legislators have been visiting home in the past few weeks and have returned expressing the discontent of their constituents.

As for the European Army of the European Community (a new literary victory), Capital wags remembering F.D.R.'s famous phrase in his rearmament speech of 1940, have coined the saying: "Divisions on hand, and on paper".

Eisenhower: Amusement in the Capital rose to a high pitch, the last few days, when the Eisenhower-for-President outfit claimed for Ike the "success" of the Lisbon conference, from which he studiously stayed away. This *gaffe* of the Ike supporters capped a succession of blunders, including the preposterous Madison Square Garden show and the antics of Tex McCrary. But the complete misunderstanding of Ike's position today is regarded as, frankly, "the limit".

Two weeks ago, this column forecasted that the General would not attend his own party in Lisbon. Our statement was, of course, greeted coldly by some here who specialize in hindsight and by others who regard such statements, even if patently true, as irrelevant because irreverent.

(We have not so far been able to get the details on a collateral story — the horror and dismay of Secretary of Defense Lovett when he learned that Ike was not going to Lisbon.)

Only one scribe (so far as we can discover) noted the fact that the head of the European Army (on paper) stayed away from the show for which months ago he was cast as the principal performer. R. H. Shackford, veteran foreign correspondent of the Scripps newspapers, cabled the news home (in the Washington *Daily News*, February 21). Shackford also noted that NATO is not "in good shape" and expected "months of delay before any substantial program can be shown". He reported Ike as not "too happy about the way things are going diplomatically or militarily" and wrote: "Many reasons are being given why General Eisenhower did not come to Lisbon. Officially, it was said, he wasn't needed because of lack of progress."

How Ike clearly feels about the ballyhoo at Lisbon is indicated by (1) his statement, as the conference closed, that he would not return to the U.S. in the "foreseeable future"; and (2) his announcement that he would soon take a trip to the Ultima Thule of NATO, the Eastern Mediterranean.

The dilemma facing Eisenhower is cruel: he can't come home because he has made such diminutive progress in building a European Army; but if he doesn't come home, his political hopes will founder.

Politics — South: Despite the miserable coverage given the South in Northern papers (Byrnes' recent notable speech in Atlanta was not reported in this area), it is recognized that the anti-Truman revolt in Dixie continues unabated.

Southern strategists aim to start another political "war of rebellion" against the Truman Democratic party, run Byrd or Russell slates in the various states and in one way or another keep electoral votes

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in the November election out of the hands of the Trumanites. Lots of things are going on, have gone on, will go on, to prepare the machinery for this down South.

Southern strategists figure that, if the election were held today, 71 electoral votes in Southern states would *not* be cast for Truman. They hope developments in Texas will add 24 to this figure; and then such states as North Carolina (14), Tennessee (11) and Arkansas (8) will thereby be influenced to jump on the Southern anti-Truman bandwagon. Thus the Truman strategists would have to calculate without the whole 128 electoral votes of the old "Solid South".

What then, if that should prove successful? According to these strategists, the Taft GHQ recognizes that it will be difficult for the GOP to sweep the North. This may be the calculation behind Taft's statement last week that he would put at least one Southern Democrat in his Cabinet. So, with the South in revolt, the election may be headed for the House of Representatives after November 4.

But right here there appears a "short cut". According to these Southerners, Taft advisers believe a deal could be made between Taft electors and Southern-state electors. They mean that the elected members of the electoral college could meet between November 4 and December 10 (date of official polling of the electoral college). Republican electors from Taft-won states in the North would stage an unprecedented unofficial caucus with electors from Southern states. The deal would be: Taft to be elected President; seniority, regardless of party label, to rule in the organization of Congress, thus leaving Southern Democrats in most of the present chairmanships of Congressional committees. — So it is whispered in Washington.

The South and Foreign Policy: Signs multiply that the South is no longer a solid phalanx behind the foreign policy of the Administration. In the past week, the most striking legislative action was the House resolution demanding that the Administration make public any secret commitments entered into between Executive leaders and British Premier Winston Churchill, during the latter's visit here. The resolution passed easily and several score of Southern Democrats voted for it. The Democratic Administration took this like it would take castor oil, and vehemently denied that any such commitments had been made.

Also, the House lobbies are still filled with talk about a sensational speech made before that body on February 19, by Democratic Representative William Jennings Bryan Dorn of South Carolina. Dorn severely attacked the Government's handling of China and Korea and strongly defended MacArthur's strategy. He bitterly assailed the official policy of concentrating our aid on Europe, as compared with our weak policy in Asia, and called the European continent a "drain on the economic well-being of the United States". He warned of peace talk in the coming campaign. He insinuated that the Kremlin, knowing the ways of American politics in a campaign year, might collaborate with Truman if the latter talks peace. "Beware of the man who campaigns this summer on a platform of peace and prosperity. If we do have peace during the election year that will be just the lull before the real storm", said Dorn, who went on to remark, "One thing I do know, the Communists will not vote for MacArthur, Byrd, Russell or Taft."

Mr. Dorn clashed with Mr. Javits (R., N.Y.) on the policy of the state of Israel, with Dorn plumping for a fair deal for the Arabs. When Mr. Javits talked of the great men of New York, Mr. Dorn retorted: "If you will just nominate Douglas MacArthur of New York City, you could count on some more South Carolina support."

The South Carolinian wound up his address, which stirred the galleries, with a demand that we place our chips on Air Power and the Navy — much in the vein of Mr. Herbert Hoover. Such is the brand new kind of talk from Dixie.

UMT: The legislation to set up the universal military training plan is now before Congress and even among supporters it is admitted that the bill may fail. A lot of time has been wasted, tactically, by protests on the score of its infringement of the rights of the individual. For better or worse, the

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bulk of the people are prepared to run this risk in the interests of national security. If UMT is necessary and good, then let's have it. But is it?

Major Gen. John S. Wood (ret.), says that UMT "as now planned will cost enormous sums of money without providing any security whatever or in any way deterring possible aggressors". Our own military contributor, General Bonner Fellers, condemns it in the strongest terms, for much the same reasons, adding that such spending would divert money badly needed to build our real defense, the Air Force. General Douglas MacArthur has urged that a decision on UMT be put off until after the present emergency.

It is significant that Hanson Baldwin, military editor of the *New York Times*, goes against the policy of his paper, which favors UMT, and opposes the plan. "Training would be limited to this country", he says in the *Times*, February 15th; "the youths would not be liable for service overseas, and our regular forces would not be strengthened but weakened, because of additional turnover and the necessity of providing training cadres for the trainees." Baldwin reports that there are many within the military service who have grave misgivings about the present legislation and are anxious to see any attempt to implement it deferred, at least for the duration of the present emergency. Some of these critics are men high in both civilian and military posts in Washington but most of them, following the 'party line' of policy, will not speak out publicly."

Between Covers: Devin-Adair announces for early publication a book of essays, *One Is a Crowd*, by our Associate Editor, Frank Chodorov. It will include a few pieces originally published in HUMAN EVENTS and *analysis*.

New rumors that a prominent publisher is negotiating for publication rights to General Patton's diary, which reportedly contains some stertorous comments on General Eisenhower's military career.

The Foundation for Economic Education has just issued a 16-page pamphlet, *The Individual in Society*, being an extract from that author's classic *Human Action*. Single copies free on application from the Foundation for Economic Education, Irvington-on-the-Hudson, N.Y.

American Bar Speaks: At the American Bar Association meeting, during the past few days, a blow was struck in behalf of the dominance of American law and the Constitution over any international agreements into which our Government has led us. The Committee on Peace and Law of the ABA, headed by Alfred J. Schweppe of Seattle, wants an amendment to our Constitution on this subject which would read: "A provision of a treaty which conflicts with any provision of this Constitution shall not be of any force or effect. A treaty shall become effective as internal law in the United States only through legislation by Congress which it could enact under its delegated powers in the absence of such a treaty." The Bar assembly passed this and other resolutions of an internationalist character.

This movement in the Bar organization stems from the efforts of its former President Frank Holman and has been spurred by fears that United Nations conventions, such as those on genocide and human rights, might supersede American law and become binding on American citizens in contravention of Federal and State laws. The movement also received impetus from an aggregation of 56 U. S. Senators, under the leadership of Senator Bricker (R., O.), which made a similar proposal on February 7. The Bricker proposal, additionally, seeks to have executive agreements, as well as treaties, covered by such an amendment. The danger which this proposal is designed to meet was described in a statement by Bricker on the floor of the Senate: "By a ruthless exercise of the treaty-making power a President, with the support of two-thirds of the Senators present and voting, could revolutionize the relationship between the American people and their government as prescribed by the Constitution. The time has come to close this constitutional loophole."

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The views expressed in this EUROPEAN SUPPLEMENT are those of an experienced European observer, and are interesting for that reason, but they do not necessarily reflect the views of HUMAN EVENTS—Editors.

By BERTRAND DE JOUVENEL Paris — February, 1952

The Reversal of Alliances: Less than seven years ago, the Allies proposed to achieve, by occupation, the complete disarmament and demilitarization of Germany and the elimination or control of all German industry that could be used for military production. As against this, *U. S. News* announced (February 1): "The new [Western] German army, as now planned . . . will be the biggest single element in the active forces of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization." This reversal of policy is due, of course, to a changed attitude toward Russia, brought on by her whole course from the subjection of Poland to the rape of Prague (a town fated to serve as a danger signal for democracies). America expressed her disapproval strongly, in the Truman Doctrine and finally in the Atlantic Treaty. Indirect protection of Europe by threat of American intervention, however, seemed insufficient; a balance of forces had to be created on the Continent itself.

The American public has been told time and again that 270 million western Europeans should find it easy to match the forces of Soviet Russia and her more or less willing satellites. But the defense potentialities of a population can be activated only by its government (that indeed is what governments are for), and there is no one government over these 270 millions. The five governments of the Brussels Pact (France, Italy and the Benelux countries) did not find it possible to raise adequate forces. Britain, while making the most considerable individual effort of any country east of the Atlantic, refused to make a Continental commitment. The rearming of Western Germany seemed the only alternative to a heavy permanent American commitment.

European Army or German Army? If a Federation or at least Confederation of Western Europe had arisen in the post-war years — including either the German Lander individually or Federal Germany collectively — this body politic would have had its Army, properly called the European Army. This unfortunately did not happen. A major reason for its not happening was that the French waited upon the English and allowed themselves to be deflected from the political to the "functional" approach, in the hope that if it were a matter of concrete specialized action, the British would participate; a hope the English encouraged but which came to nothing.

Consequently, when the Korean shooting war aroused, especially in the U. S., the fear that fighting might also flare up in Europe, and when the setting up of adequate local forces came up for consideration in the meeting of the Atlantic Council, September, 1950, the forces were thought of as originating in sovereign countries. America sug-

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gested that Western German forces, to the tune of ten divisions, be raised to fill up the empty framework of NATO. This created a great flurry in France, and M. Moch came out with a countersuggestion which was announced on October 24 as the Pleven Plan or European Army.

The American public seemed surprised that this idea, of French origin, should arouse as much opposition as it has in the French Assembly. This apparent contradiction, however, is easily explained. Two major changes intervened between the launching of the idea and the completion of technical plans. One is Britain's refusal, the other a change in the nature of the project.

Britain's refusal to participate, it is said, should have been expected. It could hardly have been expected by those who had heard Mr. Churchill in the Strasbourg Assembly (August 11, 1950) when he offered a resolution stating: "The Assembly . . . calls for the immediate creation of a European Army under the authority of a European Minister of Defense subject to proper unified democratic control and acting in full cooperation with the United States and Canada."

The change in the nature of the project is its alteration from a force of national regiments (called combat teams) to a force of national integrated divisions (called groups). I am told by experts that the latter project is quite sensible from the military angle and that it will make possible a good deal of standardization and saving in overhead. But it is quite apparent that the twelve Western German divisions of the European army will in fact constitute a German Army of twelve divisions. Therefore, what the French Assembly found itself faced with is precisely that rearmament of Germany which M. Moch and M. Pleven had sought to avoid.

Franco-German Relations: The French must learn to think of German soldiers as comrades-in-arms not as a threat to France. That, however, implies a French attitude which does not exist. Had Franco-German friendship and association preceded the setting up of a German army, all would have been well.

It must, however, be realized that cooperation at the administrative level does not bring about a mass psychological change. The French have certainly been won over to the *intellectual* notion of "Europe" and therefore of association with Western Germany. But this has no *effective* content as yet. Though the French would like a "Europe", it does not mean that they as yet like or trust the Germans. I have no doubt that the French would have responded to some moving scene of unification, say if the Strasbourg Assembly had resulted in a proclamation of "Europe"; but it was tediously well-behaved and uneventful. The one thing that does capture the French imagination is the revival of the Wehrmacht.

Bringing together France and Germany will be incomparably more difficult after this than it was before. More difficult because French memories and fears have been

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aroused by a growing German self-confidence. The most precious years for the desirable welding of Franco-German links have been allowed to slip by with nothing achieved but, to my mind, a futile administrative set-up. Frankly, I think very little of the Schuman Plan and other such arrangements; the cooperative efforts of civil servants from various nations cannot produce a society of common sympathies.

When the first meeting of the European Assembly was held in 1949, its members should have boldly proclaimed themselves a Convention of Europe. They did not, and it is my feeling that the chances of European unity have been declining ever since. This year seems the last in which a political union can be started. It should have been launched before any mention of Wehrmacht; after the very first appearance of the Wehrmacht it will be too late.

No Opportunity? Some people smile at this talk of opportunities missed and say that "Europe" was never a real possibility. This is the British thesis, now gaining acceptance on the Continent. Of course if the only mode of constitution of a political body is progressive growth, then talk of "Europe" is inane; for it is a fact that the historic process of the nations of Europe has been toward particularism.

The nations of Europe are the products of the crack-up of a common body. The differences within Europe were less accentuated in the IXth than in the XIIIth century, less in the XIIIth than in the XVth, less in the XVth than in the XVIIth; in short, the differences have increased with time. Historians who tried to purge textbooks of nationalistic traditions had to abandon the attempt, having found that the whole "progress" of their respective nations consisted in the development of characteristics in contrast to those of their neighbors.

Therefore, there is no inherent tendency to unite. Union can only result from the welding of peoples in the red heat of enthusiasm. This may or may not be possible. Anyhow, the present efforts to bind the separate nations of Western Europe amounts to nothing more than trying to bind peoples together with red tape.

Franco-German Alliance? The common threat could bring the nations of Western Europe into a workable alliance. As between the old allies of the First War — England, France, Italy, Belgium and Holland — there is no difficulty in effecting an agreement. The difficulties begin with the insertion of Germany.

It is futile to speak of keeping German rearmament within bounds; this is the sort of thing which only diplomats believe. If you rearm Germany it is because you are short of divisions. The more of them the better, particularly because these are the divisions needed to replace the American army. Because Germany offers the solution of a problem which is worrying the U. S., it will inevitably come to be looked on more favorably than any other European country. It would be unnatural not to shower facilities upon the nation in the best position to hold the easiest line of European defense.

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This will arouse the jealousy of other nations and will exasperate the French. In the past, whenever Germany waxed strong France felt impelled to seek alliances on Germany's eastern flank — Sweden, Russia or Poland. There is no prospect of such protective alliances at present.

On the other hand, a restored Western Germany will evidently not be content to suffer the amputation of Eastern Germany. There are two obvious means of getting her own back: by the force of arms or by a bargain with Russia. These prospects are to be kept in mind. We find ourselves at a turning point of European affairs.

The plain fact is that the European amalgam of 1945 was not forced into the mould of a European cake. The old separatism is hardening and to such an extent that soon it will be absurd to speak of "Western Europeans".

The Importance of Framework: This phenomenon is not due to the violence of nationalist passions but to the simple fact that problems which from day to day arise are solved within existing frameworks. Notwithstanding O.E.C.E. commitments as to the liberation of trade within "Europe", the French government has suspended the operation of such arrangements because it found itself short of the means of foreign payment which importers asked for. So long as responsibilities ultimately rest with national States, solutions are bound to be national solutions. And responsibilities cannot be made to rest upon international agencies so long as the people elect national governments from which they demand action.

The opportunity for creating the larger framework is provided by the complete loss of faith of Continental Europeans in their individual governments. Students of various nationalities express the view that a new overall government might be free of the vices which they find in national governments. This idea is especially strong in France.

The French Political Problem: In a previous report, I stressed the fact that in France government exists by day to day bargaining for an elusive majority. This process reached an all-time high (or low) on February 16, in the debate on the European Army, when the government allowed its attitude on a vital international matter to be determined not by its understanding of the national interest but by its need of the Socialist vote. This may be the Black Saturday of the Fourth Republic. The government's only sound policy was the Schuman program of Franco-German cooperation; the Socialists had neither the courage of defeating it nor that of sustaining it. But they took the opportunity to embarrass the government by stipulating impossible conditions.

French public opinion, deeply worried about developments in North Africa, aware that the monetary reserves behind the franc are fast running out, fearful that Germany may come to be a more important factor than France, is on all these scores passing from amused tolerance of her politicians' vagaries to indignant intolerance.

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